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SENSITIVE

ZAGREB SENDS FOR BELGRADE  
L FOR ANNA MANSFIELD  
EUR-IO/EX FOR PMO MARGARET SULA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AMGT](#) [KLIG](#) [ODIP](#) [OFDP](#) [AEMR](#) [AMGT](#) [PREL](#) [SR](#)  
SUBJECT: SERBIAN MFA PROMISES TO PAY DAMAGES, PREVIEWS LEGAL  
CHALLENGES TO KOSOVO

Summary

**¶1.** (SBU) A Serbian Ministry of Foreign Affairs official confirmed to the Ambassador that the Serbian Government will pay all damage to embassies during the riots on February 21. The official also said the Serbian Government had formed a legal team to consider suing foreign governments over Kosovo's declaration of independence. End Summary.

GOS Will Pay Embassy Damages

**¶2.** (SBU) On February 27, MFA Secretary General Borislav Stefanovic told the Ambassador that the GOS would pay for all damage inflicted on the embassy during the February 21 riots in Belgrade. During a demarche by ambassadors from countries whose missions were damaged by rioters, Stefanovic confirmed Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic's public statements on February 25 that "Serbia would be responsible" for all damage to embassies.

Legal Team to Consider Lawsuits over Kosovo

**¶3.** (SBU) Stefanovic told the Ambassador in a private meeting on February 28 that the GOS had agreed to form a "legal team" made up of representatives of the Foreign Ministry and Kosovo Ministry to decide on lawsuits against countries that recognize Kosovo's declaration of independence. Stefanovic noted there was a divide between the Democratic Party (DS) which controls the MFA and the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) which controls the Kosovo Ministry over the team's purpose. According to Stefanovic, DS officials believe the team should "explore" the possibility of lawsuits while the DSS is preparing to sue. Branislav Ristivojevic, a close legal advisor to Prime Minister Kostunica (DSS) said on February 27 that Serbia GOS will sue any country that recognizes Kosovo "in every international court." On February 28, Jeremic said Serbia "will request the opinion of the International Court on Justice (ICJ) in The Hague as to whether the unilateral declaration of Kosovo's independence represents a violation of international law."

Comment

**¶4.** (SBU) Stefanovic spoke on behalf of his government that the GOS will pay for all damage to the Embassy during the February 21 riots. Post is keeping a detailed accounting of all costs associated with the damage. End Comment.

MUNTER